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ABSTRACT

Several studies have demonstrated that music has many uses in today's classroom. In addition to a positive classroom environment, stronger curriculum content, and effective teaching strategies, research indicates that music is also an effective management strategy. A musical program was designed for third and fourth grade teachers to achieve classroom management. Music reduces stress, improves behavior, enhances learning, and provides an appreciation for various cultures. A well-managed classroom celebrates learning and facilitates a rapport between teacher and students. Contains 10 references. (Author/BT)

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The Role of Music in Classroom Management

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ABSTRACT

Several studies have demonstrated that music has many uses in today's classroom. In addition to a positive classroom environment, stronger curriculum content, and effective teaching strategies, research indicates that music is also an effective management strategy. We have designed a musical program for third and fourth grade teachers to achieve classroom management. A well-managed classroom celebrates learning and facilitates a rapport between teacher and students.

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The Role of Music in Classroom Management

Classroom Management

Music is one of the most effective techniques that can be used to facilitate classroom management. Classroom management can be defined as "all of the things that a teacher does to organize students, space, time and materials so that instruction in content and student learning can take place." Bauer (2001). Effective classroom management is crucial to the environment in which the teacher and students coexist. Successful classroom management means that the teacher plans, organizes and anticipates any problem that might occur in the course of the school day. A music curriculum spans the gap between the challenges of learning and student discipline. We will endeavor to provide a curriculum design for third and fourth grade teachers to implement. It is our goal to assist teachers in managing productive classrooms by integrating music into their daily activities.

According to Buck (1992), all student behavior in general appears to be getting worse: increased gang violence, vandalism, drug abuse, and a general disrespect for authority are having a profound impact on many of the nation's classrooms. Buck (1992) suggests that students are misbehaving out of frustration. Many activities and tasks are too difficult for students which is resulting in acting out an aggressive behavior. Successful classroom management touches every aspect of the learning and teaching process. It incorporates the use of effective instruction, student discipline, group management, assessing what needs to be changed and figuring out how to change it. If done correctly, classroom management allows the teacher to make the best use of his/her time and resources.

Teachers feel more anxiety about how to maintain classroom order than about any other

aspect of working in a classroom (Reston, 2000). In this article, Reston (2000) suggests that even though there is no magic bullet with respect to classroom management, there are strategies that a teacher can implement in order to minimize discipline problems. Music for example, has proven to be an effective strategy in achieving control. We believe that when music is incorporated into the classroom, discipline issues lessen.

Establishing Classroom Management

Reston (2000) asserts that the three key elements of classroom management are: attitude, organization and communication. A teacher's attitude towards the students can directly affect how the students respond and learn in the classroom. Just as teachers want respect, so do students. Good organization will help a teacher maintain classroom management. It is important that teachers be prepared and be able to handle any situation that arises in the classroom. Open communication with students and their parents also will lead to decreased discipline problems and increased effective teaching and learning.

Viadero (2002) states that discipline problems are a disruption to classroom environments. Research has demonstrated that a variety of techniques can help teachers with classroom management. However, many teachers are unaware of various strategies that can assist them. For example, a teacher should not play the behavior escalation game. This happens when a student confronted by a teacher is asked to stop a particular behavior. In response, there is a confrontation that escalates in which the teacher loses ground in his or her own classroom. If the student gets the better of the teacher, then it compromises the teacher's ability to control the class. The best action would be for the teacher to reinforce positive behavior in the classroom while the students are earning small rewards.

The author (Viadero 2000) suggests a new view of discipline and classroom management. Discipline should be seen as a system which includes both preventive and intervention strategies that are designed to manage rather than control student behavior. In order to prevent management problems, it is important to structure the environment and curriculum for learning. The teacher's behavior should also be structured when dealing with students. A teacher should be clear and concise about classroom rules and behavior expectations. Again there is an emphasis on the positive not the negative.

Addressing Student Needs

Gordon (2001), states that classroom management involves meeting the needs of students according to Maslow's hierachy. When the needs for physiological satisfaction, safety, nurturing, personal values, and self-actualization are met, teachers can proceed along to instruction. There are different levels of discipline problems: level one- gum chewing, level two talking,interrupting lessons, level three- use of profane language and level four-fighting or use of weapons. Teachers are on the forefront of controlling their classrooms. As good role models and managers, teachers can use verbal praise to motivate proper behavior.

Bauer (2001), states that good classroom management begins with the teacher. Proper planning, preparation, and modeling assist with effective management. Good teaching practice facilitates this by encouraging students to respect and look up to their teacher. Keeping students engaged, occupied, and interested helps them stay on task and not digress. Finally, in order for classroom management to succeed a teacher should realize that an effective classroom is not an accident. It is a combination of teacher modeling, clear and concise directions, consistency in responding to student behavior and teaching that motivates learning.

Music as a Tool in Classroom Management

According to Reston (2001) there are several different options available to teachers. These options include music as part of the school curriculum and effective classroom management techniques. Music, so often overlooked because of budget constraints, can be an effective means of assisting the teacher in the management of the class. If it is true that one of the keys to classroom management is maintaining students' interests, then music is the unlocked door to their minds. Music can be the gateway to knowledge. The power of music and its relevance to the curriculum suggest that we need more of it in the classroom. If we want to maintain positive classroom management then music can help by making the day more alive and interesting, which in turn leads to increased learning and decreased discipline problems. Music can encourage teamwork and cohesiveness. It can foster discipline and commitment. Music can be a therapeutic outlet for students which is vital to their behavior in class. Music can provide success for some students who have difficulty with other aspects of the school curriculum.

Positive Effects of Music

Davies (2000) states that music enhances learning. Both hemispheres of the brain are engaged when music is played. The emotional effect of music is an asset in the classroom. The stress relieving affects can be utilized to change the mood in the classroom, assist with transitional activities and alleviate discipline problems. Music can enrich and enliven lessons. Learners can stay focused on tasks. The student remains engaged and the need for disciplinary intervention remains low.

Miller (2003) feels that music stirs memories, banishes boredom, and creates a harmonious atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher who uses music can increase interest and motivation in the classroom, thus requiring less time spent on discipline issues. The teacher who uses music

particularly in group singing can lower the walls between people, decrease competitive instincts and build cooperation in its place. Interest and motivation are enhanced by having music as part of the curriculum. Often the teacher can use different types of music such as pop, rock, jazz rap and classical.

Zeiger (1996), lists the steps that can be implemented to enhance the positive environment in a classroom. According to Zeiger (1996),teachers must maintain control to see that this occurs. Some of these include: staying calm despite the situation, enforcing the rules, having a flexible plan and "stress the importance of music." Students should be told of the benefits of music: pleasure, cultural explorations, expression of emotion, and one's creativity.

Music and Culture

Multicultural classrooms today incorporate music as a vital part of learning and discovering. The added advantage is that students stay focused, show interest and become motivated. Classrooms become positive environments. These aforementioned articles support the current theme of multicultural classrooms and the importance of music in them.

Music, if used correctly by the teacher can help teach about cultural awareness and values. Miller (2003) goes into detail regarding how we can use music when teaching about holidays which students look forward to as a break in routine from the mundane. Students are curious and teachers can use music to their advantage to decrease boredom and increase learning.

Reston (2001) feels that the role of the teacher is reflective. In the reflective approach the teacher is proactive. This occurs through planning, organization, and anticipation of problems. A reflective teacher using music is perceptive, creative, and illustrative. Music can formulate many creative moments on the part of the teacher and student. Teachers that strive for classroom environments in which students are engaged in music as part of a learning process, realize that

students have no reason or opportunity to create discipline problems.

Thornburg (1989), states that the power of music, and its relevance to subjects as diverse as history and math, suggest that we need more of it in the classroom. However, most classrooms today give the impression that music has never been invented, yet no culture on this planet is without music. Music is one of the most effective techniques used in classroom management. Classroom management can be defined as "all of the things that a teacher does to organize students, space, time and materials so that instruction in content and student learning can take place." (Bauer, 2001).

A music curriculum spans the gap between the challenges of learning and student discipline. To follow will be a music guide for third and fourth grade teachers to assist them in managing . It is our goal to assist teachers in managing productive classrooms by integrating music into their daily activities.

Introduction to Project Design

As the literature has demonstrated, implementing music as a classroom management strategy is beneficial to both the student and the teacher. The use of music is an effective strategy in maintaining a positive classroom environment. Therefore we propose the following example of a project design for use with third and fourth grade students.

Project Design

Suggested Projects: Third Grade

Daily Classroom Activity:

Part I - Listening to music CDs as background music.Examples of music are: "Quiet Places" by Hap Palmer,"Mozart and Me" by K. Roth and J. Biely, "Guitar by the Fire" by John Tesh and "Dare to Dream" by Yanni.

Part II - Math, Music and Literature Link using "Schoolhouse Rock" series. Multiplication series along with books such as "The Shoemaker and the Elves."

Part III - Culture or Holiday of the Month: a celebration with music.

(See fourth grade for examples).

Suggested Projects: Fourth Grade

Daily Classroom Activity:

Part I - Listening to music CDs as background music.Examples of music are "40 Winks" by Jessica Harper, "The Sun Upon the Lake is Low" by M. Robertson and D. Jackson and "Simply the BestClassical Anthems."

Part II - Music as a stimulus to writing poetry: haiku, acrostic and cinquaine. Haiku will feature seasons, acrostic will feature their full names and cinquaine will be about a subject. Haiku and cinquaine music accompaniment are "The Four Seasons Inspired by the Sounds of Nature" by Vivaldi and "Nature Sounds" by Hal Wright.

Part III - Culture or Holiday of the Month: a celebration with music.

Culture or Holiday of the Month Selections:

September - "Pasion" by Esteban (Spanish guitar music), "Beethoven's Wig Sing Along Symphonies" (By Rounder Kids) and "Classic Disney-Sixty Years of Music".

October - "Halloween Howls" by Andrew Gold, "It's Halloween" by Paul Nakles and "Columbus Day Songs" by Ruth Roberts.

November - "Holiday Songs Around the World" by Catherine Slonecki, "Songs about Native Americans" by L. Skiera-Zuckek and "Thanksgiving Songs" by R. Roberts.

December - "The Broadway Kids Sing Christmas," "It's Holiday Time" by Barbara Harris and

"Raffi's Christmas Album.

January - "Celebrate Holidays" by Sara Jordan.

February - "I Got Shoes" by Sweet Honey in the Rock, Jambo and Other Call and Response Songs and Chants"By Ella Jenkins and "Valentine Songs" by R. Roberts.

March - "American Heroes" by Jonathan Sprout and "Spring Songs" by R. Roberts.

April - "Easter Songs" by R. Roberts, "Jewish Songs for Children" by Rachel Buchman and "Splash Zone" by Inda Arnold.

May - "Holiday Piggyback Songs" by Jean Warren and "Pinata Bilingual Songs for Children" by Sarah Barcas.

June - "Holiday Songs for All Occasions" by Jill Galina and "Coconut Moon" by Green Chili Band.

Conclusion

There is a need for more effective strategies in classroom management. Many studies demonstrate that classrooms today present many discipline challenges for teachers. One of the most underutilized strategies is introducing music. It reduces stress, improves behavior, enhances learning and provides an appreciation for various cultures. Our curriculum design, that was developed for third and fourth grade is meant to assist teachers, especially new ones. It adds tools to their teaching repertoire that will enhance their classroom experience.

Music is one of our most effective management tools and is readily available. It provides a way for teachers to manage and a way for students to diffuse tension. It is a win-win solution. Teachers should be eager to develop and explore this proven strategy.

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